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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/527,243	10/04/2005	Sjoerd Gerard Vrijburg	4828-050784	2866

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EXAMINER

PATEL, TAJASH D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3765

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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03/16/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/527,243	VRIJBURG, SJOERD GERARD	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Tejash D. Patel	3765	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 December 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17-32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 17-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pierce (US 4,756,026).

Pierce discloses a device (50) worn about the leg including a protective body (12) with under and upper sides being made of a elastic sleeve (56), col. 5, lines 35 that has a recess for placing on the front side of a leg as shown in figure 5. The protective body wholly encloses the leg as seen in the horizontal direction with the underside defining a recess through which the foot is inserted therethrough and is positioned adjacent to the skin as also shown in figure 5. Also, the device includes two support foam members (62,64,66) secured to the elastic sleeve which are substantially on either side of a front side thereof as shown in figures 1 and 3. Further, the body extends above the foot in a vertical direction as shown in figure 5.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to recognize that elastic sleeve of Pierce having foam support members will be form fitting while preventing irritation to the skin when the device is worn or depending on the end use thereof.

It would have been obvious that one of the support foam member of Pierce can be made of the resilient material such as plastic, neoprene, rubber etc. since such material have a certain degree of resiliency that is similar to one another as known in the art.

With regard to claim 23, it is obvious that the support members of Pierce has varying thickness due to stretchable properties of the elastic material.

With regard to claim 31, it is obvious that the device of Pierce wholly worn about the leg defined a tubular sleeve is conventionally formed by a substantially vertical seam as known in the textile art.

Further, with regard to claim 32, it would have been obvious to provide the protective body of Pierce can be provided with indicia or marking thereon as a matter of design choice or depending on the end use thereof.

Response to Amendment

3. The reply filed on December 9, 2008 has been considered. In view of such, the objection to the specification and the 112-2nd has been withdrawn. However, a newly discovered prior art has prompted this action to be made new non-final and the arguments are moot.

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Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tejash Patel whose telephone number is (571) 272-4993. The fax phone number for this group is (571) 273-8300.

March 7, 2009

/Tejash Patel/
Primary Examiner